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UPS AND DOWNS

—OF—

The Oil Fields.

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A PLAY WRITTEN ON THE EARLY DAYS OF OILDOM.

—:o:—

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

—BY—

Wm. N. Calvert.

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MILLERSTOWN, PA.
"HERALD" BOOK AND JOB PRINTING OFFICE.
1890.

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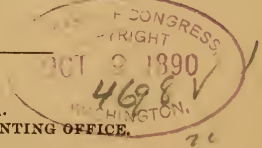

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UPS AND DOWNS IN OIL FIELDS.

A Play Written on the Early Days of Oildom A Drama in Three Acts by Wm. N. Calvert.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

J. B. BLACKMORE, an Oil King.
BYRON M. SWIFT, Oil Well Pumper.
JONATHAN SWIFT, an Eastern Yankee.
JOSEPH VERNE, Confidential Clerk and Lawyer.
HARRY HOLMES, Book Keeper.
MRS. J. B. BLACKMORE, Oil King's wife.
BESSIE BLACKMORE, Oil King's daughter.
BERTHA MOSS, schoolmarm.
POLLY AND JANE SCHRUGGINS, two old maids.
TOM JINKS, an English dude.
Teamsters, Officers. and others.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Office of Blackmore & Co., with sign over door. Desk and office furniture. Blackmore discovered reading. Holmes at desk examining books.

Blackmore. Mr. Holmes, have we received any news yet from that last shipment of oil?

Holmes. Yes, here is the letter. (Hands letter. Blackmore reads aloud.)

MESSRS. BLACKMORE & CO:—Gentlemen: Your shipment of the 21st has arrived. You may draw on us for ten thousand dollars through Bennett Brothers. Very Truly Yours,

T. B. HARCORT & CO.

Blackmore. (Looking up). When Verne comes in tell him to

make that draft on Harcourt and have that small sum placed on our private books. The next shipment will not be so large. It can go on the company's books. Remember and put all the expenses on the company's books. We will want a little wine supper out of that ten thousand some of these nights. I say, Holmes, my hair pulls this morning; where did you get that whiskey we had last night? It must be rare.

Holmes. It was called the best in the city. It cost five dollars a quart. You must have drank too much.

Blackmore. Why, bless you; I did not drink two dozen glasses. (Rubs head.) I will be back soon. (Exit.)

[Enter Verne.]

Verne. Good morning, Mr. Holmes. Where is Mr. Blackmore this morning?

Holmes. Oh, his hair pulls as usual, and and he has gone to get it straightened out.

Verne. He is drinking too much lately, and does too much talking when he is full. It is rumored now on the street that he is doing a crooked business.

Holmes. Well, if the people knew all they would think so; selling ten-eighths in a well and yet holding the controlling interest. How did he manage that?

Verne. By selling interests to the different people from the cities and never having more than four stockholders here at one time. They all think that is all he sold. He makes the assessments light, but I am afraid he will get into trouble yet; he carries it too bold. There is a man at the hotel now, a Yankee, who is looking after something. He is very smart or very green. I don't know what to make of him.

[Enter Blackmore excited.]

Blackmore. I say boys, there is a funny old Yank at the hotel, and I think he has money. I have a notion to sell him an eighth in the well.

Verne. You had better watch that Yank. I was talking with him, and I believe he is pretty smart.

Blackmore. Oh, he is as green as a pumpkin. Interview the old chap to-day Verne, and see what we can make of him. We will have

a little wine party to-night, and invite the old Yank in. We will have some fun, and at the same time sound him and see what can be made out of him. Now, boys, I am going to the country to-day to try and get a lease of the old maid's farm. (Exit. Curtain.)

SCENE II.—Hotel office. Discovers Mr. Swift reading paper and talking to his son.

Mr. Swift. Here, boy, listen to this (Reads.) The Blackmore well is one of the best producing wells in this district, judging from the number of barrels that leave it daily. (Turning to his son.) And still calling on money every month for expenses. There is something wrong here that must be made right.

[Enter Verne.]

Verne. Good morning! Mr. Swift, I believe.

Swift. Yes, sir; Johathan Swift, at your service.

Verne. My name is Verne, and I represent the firm of Blackmore & Co., oil producers.

Swift. Glad to meet you sir. You are the very man I want to see. I am thinking of investing in this business, and you can give me some advice and much needed information.

Verne. (Laughing.) I might advise you wrong.

Swift. So you might, but any information you can give me will be appreciated. I have some money lying idle, and you know it is a good thing to keep it moving.

Verne. Yes, I believe I can find a very good investment in a few days for you, and in the meantime I hope to improve your acquaintance. We would be pleased to have you call at our office this evening, where we are to have a little wine party.

Swift. I will be happy to do so.

Verne. This is your son, I believe.

Swift. Yes, this is my son, Byron M. Swift. (They shake hands.) I think I will get him a situation, and then I will invest.

Verne. (Rises.) Bring your son with you this evening. I think Mr. Blackmore will give him a situation, and in the mean time we can find some profitable investment. Good day. (Exit.)

Swift. By gum, boy, this is splendid; it is the very thing I want. If I can get you in that office I can find out where my money is going. You must be very green and play your part well. (Going out door. Curtain.)

SCENE III.—Office as in scene 1st. Table with glasses and liquor bottles. Blackmore and party seated at table drinking.

Blackmore. (Pours out drink.) Here is to the health of the Yank. I think it is about time he was here.

[Enter Swift and Son.]

Blackmore. Good evening, Mr. Swift; be seated.

Swift. Haouw dew ye deow. This is my son, Byron Swift.

Blackmore. That is a smart boy of your's, Swift.

Swift. Naouw you'r right, Mr. Blackmore. If that boy works for you one month, yeou could not deou without him. Yeou give that boy a slate and pencil and he can tell yeou what oil will be worth next summer. (All laugh.)

Blackmore. Mr. Swift, I believe I will have to give your son a situation. Well, Mr. Swift, join us in a glass of wine.

Swift. We never drink. (Winks at boy. Sends boy to postoffice. They then drink several times. Boy returns.)

Young Swift. There is no mail for us.

Swift. (Takes boy aside.) Keep in good company; do as dad does; never drink. (While boy's back is turned he drinks again. This is repeated every few minutes, during which the others continue to converse about oil matters. Sends his son to the hotel and plays very drunk, blowing about his smart son.) Now, Mr. Blackmore, how much will you pay my boy, and what do you want him to dew?

Blackmore. Well, I will pay him three dollars a day to look after the office and well, see to the oil, and he can learn to pump.

Swift. Yeou don't say! That is most a fortune. You will find out he is pretty smart when he is here a few days. (Aside to audience He will straighten things out.) Mr. Blackmore, you must be making money pretty fast to give such wine parties.

Blackmore. Oh, this is nothing, sometimes they cost me two thousand dollars.

Swift. Yeou don't say. (Aside. I think it costs me something, too. We will straighten it all up.) Say, Mr. Blackmore, I bought a small interest in a lease from a man in New York, and I came out here to hunt it up.

Blackmore. Have you found it yet?

Swift. No, I will let my boy hunt for it, and when you get me a good investment I will come out and pay you for it. (They all drink.

Swift gets very drunk and slips to the floor muttering, "Boy keep in good company." The others leave the office, leaving Swift. Swift rises, goes to desk, and examines papers and books. (To audience.) Mr. Blackmore, we will have some fun with the old Yank. (Exit. Curtain.)

SCENE IV.—Office. Blackmore and companions discovered.

Blackmore. I wonder what has become of the old Yank and his smart son.

[Enter Swift and Son.]

Swift. Good morning, Mr. Blackmore.

Blackmore. Good morning Mr. Swift. This is a fine morning. Your son can go to work this morning, and I trust we will get along well.

Swift. (Aside.) You bet you will, and in the end he will straighten you up as straight as a sucker rod.

Blackmore. Mr. Swift, have a hair-straightener this morning? (Pours drinks.)

Swift. (Winks towards boy.) I never drink. (When boy's back is turned takes big drink.) Goes to boy and says: "Always keep in good company." I am going east for a short time, and when I return I hope you will have a good investment for me.

Blackmore. I will have something for you in a few days, as I have a farm in view that looks good at present

Swift. All right, I will be on hand. (To boy. Keep an eye on that farm. I won't be far away.) Well, good-day; be good to the boy.

Blackmore. Good-by; remember the investment. (Exit Swift.)

Blackmore. (To boy.) Now, Mr. Swift, what is your first name?

Young Swift. Byron M. Swift, sir.

Blackmore. Well, for short, we will call you Jack. Now, Jack, you can go down to the well and see that there is no oil hauled away only on orders from this office.

Byron, or Jack. All right, I will attend to it and keep it straight. (Exit.)

(Blackmore reads and soon exits. Holmes writes at desk all this time. Noise of wagons is heard without, and following dialogue between teamsters.)

1st T. Get up, Tom. I'm 'fraid I will lose that old hoss just as I

did that mule which got into the mud hole. I only saw the point of one ear after he went down, and now they drive right over him.

2d. T. Hello, Dave; what stock is that bald face of yours?

1st T. I kin trace that stock right back to Nowers ark. I drove that hoss from Pittsburg to Titusville once in six hours.

2d. T. Oh, you are mistaken; that is 150 miles.

1st T. I don't care if it is 500. I could prove it if old Bill Jones was alive. I hauled ten tons of stone with that brown team, and I could prove it if old Bill was alive.

2d T. Yes, Old Bill was a great man. He was a standing witness for everyone.

1st T. I hope the teams won't block the road to-day. The last time I was blocked I hat to set on my wagon three days and nights before I got moving. (Sounds gradually fading away and voices lost.

Jack. (Jack rushes in office.) How is this? Some men haul six barrels, some seven, and some eight, and their order is for one load.

Holmes. Oh, we fix that when we settle with the teamsters. (Pulls out watch.) Time for dinner. (Closes desk. Exits.)

Jack. (Examines papers and books.) By gosh! Only six barrels goes to the company's dump. I will straighten things all out yet. Mr. Blackmore, there is a shadow after you. (Exit. Curtain.)

SCENE 5.—Office. Table. Chairs. Blackmore party discovered gambling. Jack waiting on table and delivering drinks.

Blackmore. (Feeling in pocket.) Jack, hand me a match. Oh, never mind, I have a small bill. (Pulls out ten dollar bill, lights it at lamp and lights cigar. Jack watching closely.)

Jack. (Aside.) Ten dollars! There goes some of dad's money. Well, I will make things all right yet.

Blackmore. (Drinks.) I say boys, this is hard wine. Jack, get me some soda water.

Jack. (Starts, then turns.) Hot or cold?

Blackmore. Cold, you dunce; I want to drink it.

Jack. (Starts, turns, and says:) Mr. Blackmore, aint you mistaken? You surely do not want to drink soap and water. (All laugh.)

Blackmore. Soda water. Go to the saloon and ask for a bottle of soda water. (Jack soon returns with bottle, hands to Blackmore who does not take it, but says): Open it.

Jack. It is all tied up with a sand pump line.

Blackmore. Cut it. (Jack cuts string. Cork hits Blackmore in face and spills soda water over others at table. Blackmore scolds.

Jack. I did not know it was loaded (Then wipes up water and play is resumed. All drink frequently. Money on table. Dispute and hot words follow between Blackmore and gambler.

Gambler. You are a drunken liar. The money is mine. (Blackmore and Gambler spring to their feet each drawing a revolver and covering the other. Others fall back terror-stricken. Jack springs between and strikes up their arms as the pistols are fired. Others now interfere. Holmes secures money. Jack puts hat on Blackmore and leads him out. Curtain, and rises on bedroom in Blackmore's house. Mrs. Blackmore and daughter discovered. Enter Blackmore; takes off shoes; falls over chair; is very drunk.

Blackmore. (Hick) What did you get up for?

Mrs. B. Oh, Mr. Blackmore; have you no respect for your wife and child?

Blackmore. (Hick) Got dispatch from New York, you know; oil gone up, you know; was waiting for dispatch, you know; got in with the boys, you know. (Tries to find bed, but falls on floor and sleeps.)

Mrs. B. Oh, why was such a thing as liquor invented? (Rings hands.) Oh, is it possible that I am tied to such dissipation—the one thing I most dread? Oh, my God; when I think of my child! (Rings hands and cries.) Oh, my child, my child; would that I had never seen this hour. Oh, this is the beginning of dark days—if I only had a mother to go to.

Blackmore. (Yells out.) Maudlin, can't you keep that brat of a young one still and let a gentleman sleep? The mattress is as hard as a brick. You (hick) ought to be thrashed for making a bed as hard as this. (Sleeps. Curtain.)

Scene 6.—Morning. Office. Holmes at desk. Verne reading paper.

[Enter Blackmore.]

Blackmore. Good morning, boys; I have heard of a farm for sale or lease. It is owned by a couple of old maids. I am going to get that farm and sell it to that old Yank.

Jack. (Listening at door. Aside.) We will see about that. (Exit. Curtain.)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Room in farm house. Two elderly ladies discovered dressed in rural style. Knock at door. Ladies arise, one says "Come in." Enter Blackmore.

Blackmore. Good day, ladies.

Old Maid. Good morning; take a chair.

Blackmore. Well, ladies, I heard you wanted to sell or lease your farm.

Old Maid. Where are you from?

Blackmore. My name is Blackmore. I am formerly from New York City, but late of Pit Hole.

Old Maid. New York is quite a big town, ain't it?

Blackmore. Yes, a large city. Which would you prefer to do; lease or sell your farm?

Old Maid. We havn't thought which. Are you married, Mr. Blackmore?

Blackmore (twists uneasily.) Well, now yes, partly.

(One Maid to the other.) Is he married only half?

Blackmore. Now, can I induce you to lease to me?

Old Maid. Have you any partners, Mr. Blackmore?

Blackmore. (Aside. Confound them, I have it.) Yes, I have two fine young men, but they both want to get married if they can find ladies.

Old Maids (move close to Blackmore.) What is their names, and how old are they?

Blackmore. Their names are Holmes and Verne. (Uneasy.) Now, if you will let me have your farm I will send them out. You can then have a talk with them. What do you say?

Old Maid. Does your partners live in New York?

Blackmore. Yes, when they are at home. Have you decided to let me have your farm?

Old Maid. When will you send your partners here?

Blackmore (Rises, walks across floor. Aside. "Oh, the devil; this is the worst I ever struck." Jack discovered peeking in at door and grinning.) I will send them tomorrow. Will you lease?

Old Maid. We must see your partners first.

Blackmore. (Aside. Old fool.) Have you got a lawyer to do your business?

Old Maid. No, them law men would take it all.

Blackmore. (Aside.) Well, they wouldn't take the women sure. I must do something quick. I'm most choked for a drink. (Aloud.) Well, ladies; who will do your legal work for you?

Old Maid. Our neighbor, Mr. Smith.

Blackmore. Very well. I will leave you a written offer, and you can show it to your neighbor. (Writes paper.) I will give you one-eighth of the oil, or $25,000 for the farm. (Exit Blackmore, who is followed outside by old maids. Jack slips in, reads paper and goes out again. Enter old maids.)

1st Old Maid. I wonder how much $25,000 is? We must look fine to-morrow when them young men comes. (Knock at door.)

Old Maid. Come in.

[Enter Jack.]

Jack. Good day, ladies.

Old maid. Good morning. Take a chair.

Jack. Well, ladies, you had a visitor, did you not?

Old Maid. Yes, sir.

Jack. Did not that man want to get your farm?

Old Maid. Yes, sir.

Jack. Now, ladies, that man is a terrible scoundrel, and you must look out for him. He would just as soon murder you as not.

2d Old Maid. Oh, sister, did we not have a narrow escape?

Jack. Now see here, ladies, there will be a man here to buy your farm. He is a very nice man—a young widower—and wants to get married so bad. Of course that is nothing to you, but he is such a nice man, and is so rich, and has got a nice carriage and horses, and drives out every day. I know he is a very nice man, and wants to get married very bad. Of course that is nothing to you, but you might have some friend who wants to get married, and then you would be dealing with a relative you know.

Old Maid. Has he much of a family?

Jack. (Rises.) Only one son, and he is grown up and takes care of himself. I think he will be here to-morrow. Well, good day, ladies. (Exit.)

1st Old Maid. Now, sister, that is our man.

2d Old Maid. Mine, you mean.

1st Old Maid. Well, I won't sign the papers unless I get a man

out of it some how. (Curtain.)

SCENE II.—The famous well of Blackmore & Co. Portion of derrick seen with tank. A force pump may be used to throw up the fluid into the tank. Teamsters continually pass and repass, rolling barrels of oil. Jack discovered with book and pencil checking off the number of barrels each teamster takes away.

Jack. How is this that your order calls for eight barrels of oil, while your partner's calls for but six?

Teamster. How long have you been here?

Jack. Just commenced work to-day.

Teamster. I thought so. The oil I haul goes to dump No. 1, while the other loads go to the common dump.

Jack. Oh, that's the way of it. All right, go ahead. (Exit teamster.) (Aside.) I see how it is. Dump No. 1 means that Mr. Blackmore looks out for Blackmore No. 1 at the company's expense. He must keep a record of his private sales, and my name is not Jack if I don't have a copy of it before a week. No wonder the dividends are small. I see we have just come out in time to stop his game. When Mr. Blackmore gets through with the old Yank he won't have so many thousands to spend on wine suppers.

[Enter Blackmore.]

Blackmore. Well, how are you getting along with your work?

Jack. Oh, first-rate. They keep me pretty busy seeing that they all load up right.

Blackmore. Yes, the shipping is the greatest expense to us.

Jack. Yes, it must be. They must be very busy shipping when you can't get it all off at one dump.

Blackmore. (Looking at him suspiciously.) What do you know about the shipping?

Jack. Nothing much, only I see they don't all drive off the same direction. (Excited.) Better look out, she's going to flow. (Both run off stage as an extra heavy flow comes and sprays over the stage as curtain falls.)

SCENE III.—

2d Old Maid. Oh, my stomach feels so bad. I have such a pain in my stomach.

1st Old Maid. Get your plaster and put it on. (Gets plaster, spreads it and drops on chair as knock is heard at door.)

[Enter Lawyer Verne in seedy clothes, pigeon-tailed coat fastened up back to collar.]

Lawyer Verne. Good day, ladies. My name is Verne. I am a lawyer and private secretary to a large oil firm.

1st Old Maid. Yes, sir; take a chair, sir.

Lawyer V. Well, ladies, I believe you gave Mr. Blackmore the refusal of your farm.

1st Old Maid. Yes, we refused him. You say you are a lawyer? Now, Mr. Verne, would you give me some advice on a promise of marriage?

Lawyer V. (Rubbing his hands together.) Willingly.

1st Old Maid. How much will you charge just for counsel?

Lawyer V. I will be very liberal. I suppose you want to bring an action for breach of promise?

1st Old Maid. I don't know, but I guess so.

Lawyer V. Be explicit, my dear madam, this is a most serious affair. Breach of promise. How my heart bleeds for you, dear young lady. Suffering virtue. But tell me the particulars.

1st Old Maid. Oh, sir, you don't know the sorrow it causes me to harrow up my feelings—my bleeding heart. I have let concealment, like a caterpillar on a rose, feed upon my cambric cheek, and (aside), and I forget the rest.

Lawyer V. Alas, poor lady! Pray go on.

1st Old Maid. The first of our acquaintance was at a corn husking—not that I make a practice of attending such vulgar places.

Lawyer V. Oh, certainly not, certainly not.

1st Old Maid. Well, I was over-persuaded. I set up and stripped the dry coatings from the yellow corn. Only two ears I husked. No more.

Lawyer V. Indeed! two ears. You are certain it was but two ears? It is best to be particular. We will make a "prima facie" case. Why did you stop at two ears?

1st Old Maid. I got hold of a red ear—it was the last I husked, so I was obliged to be kissed. Oh, think of my mortification when I was told that I had to be kissed.

Lawyer V. (With energy.) Your sufferings must have been intolerable.

1st Old Maid. Oh, sir, you know how to feel for delicate timidity.

A big, coarse fellow, called Bullies, rose to snatch the fragrance from my unwilling cheek———

Lawyer V. Oh, my———

1st Old Maid. I put up my cambric. It was a fine cambric, Mr. Lawyer. Sed I, I have a choice in those matters—looking at Edward, he took the hint, Bullies fell back—oh, spare my blushes—I felt the pressure on my———

Lawyer V. Your cheek, of course.

1st Old Maid. No, no, he stole the bliss from my lips, it was very rude in Edward. You may judge of my confusion.

Lawyer V. I do not know but that we can make out a case of assault and battery.

1st Old Maid. After that he bowed to me coming out of church.

Lawyer V. Aha! the evidence comes in. Have you proof of that, most injured fair one?

1st Old Maid. Oh, sir, no proof is needed with a lady of my standing. Well, you may judge what were the feelings of my palpitating heart, tender as it always was.

Lawyer V. Have any letters passed between you?

1st Old Maid. Oh, yes, five or six, sir.

Lawyer V. We've got him there. Will you be so kind as to show me some of those letters?

1st Old Maid. Oh, he's got them all in his possession.

Lawyer V. Terrible! How did he obtain possession of them?

1st Old Maid. Oh, I sent them sometimes by one person, sometimes by another.

Lawyer V. His letters, I mean.

1st Old Maid. Oh, sir, mark his ingratitude, he never wrote any.

Lawyer V. (Aside. Old fool, I suppose that is about all the evidence.) Now, Miss, about the refusal of your farm. I believe you gave the refusal to Mr. Blackmore?

Both old maids together. Yes, we refused him.

Lawyer V. You don't understand. I have some papers which I want you to sign.

1st Old Maid. Do you think I can make out a case of breach of promise?

Lawyer V. (Aside. Oh, confound the old fool.) Will you sign those papers?

1st Old Maid. He drove up the cows one night, and sed we had better put our farms together. He sed we would get oil on them.

Lawyer V. (Aside. Oh, horrors.) I think you had better sign those papers.

1st Old Maid. He said he would kill our calf when it got fat.

Lawyer V. (Getting mad.) If you don't sign those papers I will bring action against you. Sign at once. I have the refusal of this farm and we mean to have it.

1st Old Maid. Yes I refuse to sign.

Lawyer V. I will make you sign it.

[Enter Swift and another man.]

Swift. No you don't, old bum; don't force a lady to sign anything when I am around.

Lawyer V. How dare you interfere with my business. I am a lawyer and I know my business.

Swift. I think you had better leave as these ladies are, no doubt, tired of your company.

Lawyer V. If you don't leave and attend to your own business, I will proceed to flog you and kick you out.

Swift. Ha! ha! ha! If you kick me out you might get the ill will of the ladies who would surely not sign your false papers.

Lawyer V. How dare you talk about my papers, you villian.

Swift. Oh, get out you dead beat, those ladies are tired of you.

(Lawyer V. maks for Swift; they scuffle; ladies scream and catch Verne's coat tails, tearing coat to collar behind; Jack slips in, hits Verne with club, who falls backwards over chair that has plaster on it; jumps up very mad; plaster sticks to seat of his pants.)

Lawyer Verne. I will have you all arrested,(strikes fist on table.) I am a lawyer. I will bring a case of prima facie against everyone of you. (Exit Verne.) (Maid laments about her plaster and stomach while Swift, gent and Jack laugh heartily at Verne's coat and plaster. Curtain.)

SCENE 4.—Drawing room; scene of an evening reception; ladies and gentlemen seated about piano; some one sings by invitation; Miss Moss and dude seated near front of stage; Jack enters room, stops on seeing Miss Moss, looks surprised and says:

Jack. (Aside.) I believe it is she. No it can't be. Yes it is. No it isn't. (He approaches nearer. Miss Moss observes him,rises and says:)

Miss M. I declare if it isn't———

Jack. Yes it is—it is. (They laugh, shake hands and move across to two unoccupied chairs; meantime talking about home friends; dude rises very mad.)

Dude. What impudence. I have a notion to cane him.

Miss M. Well how is Arabella?

Jack. Arabella Witherspoon? Oh, she has grown so fast and fat that it takes both my arms to reach around her. If I had short arms I couldn't hug her alone. She is a very sweet girl; and such kisses; when I think of them I can just feel the pegs creep out of my boots and walk right up my trousers.

Miss M. (laughs.) I declare you are a very sanguine lover.

Jack. I couldn't help it; her kisses were so sweet that it is no fool of a job to turn one over in the store room of memory. Her red lips were always inviting investigation and you may believe I investigated. One of her kisses would last a week. They would gush out all over, run down my shirt bosom into my vest pocket and solidify like candy; they were fine except when she had eaten onions; at those times the nectar of love was a little strong.

Miss M. How did you and the old lady get along during your courting?

Jack. Oh, fine. She could be seen at bed time clad like an angel; with a fire shovel in one hand and a tallow dip in the other, looking to see "as how that 'ere dod blasted cat had concluded to stay in or go out." I don't like cats except in fiddle strings. Arabella always had one on her lap, just where my head ought to be.

Miss M. How is the old gentleman?

Jack. Oh he is hearty. He is so fat that it is very hard for him to make both ends meet. He kept a black bottle in the cupboard, and that made it more difficult. Arabella and I used to empty it every chance we got.

(A young lady has painted a picture of a stork which she shows dude.)

Dude. What a lovely humming bird.

Lady. Oh no that is not a humming bird.

Dude. Not? Pray what then?

Lady. A stork. (Dude examines picture in manner to allow the audience to see it.)

[Enter Mr. Swift, Sr.]

Mr. Swift. Why boy, I have been looking all over town for you.

Jack. Pa, this is Miss Moss, our old neighbor.

Miss M. Why uncle, how do you do?

Mr. S. Why, my dear—is this yourself? I suppose you are in the oil business?

Miss M. Not yet. I never expected to see you out here.

Mr. S. You just see how I will straighten this town out before I return home. I say boy, I want you to have Mr. Blackmore at the office alone at nine in the morning.

Jack. Now there will be a row, I bet.

(A dance is proposed and parties form on, Dude at head.)

Miss M. Won't you join us, uncle?

Mr. S. No; I will look on and see how you dance out in this country. (Music; Dude starts off bowing and scraping; Swift twists on chair and mutters about murdering dancing; pulls off boots, jumps up and says:

Mr. S. Take your seat. my boy, and I will show you how we used to dance. (Swift dances and jumps around lively, promenades down centre; when at his height drop Curtain.)

[Office as in Scene First. Blackmore discovered soliloquizing]

Blackmore. I can say, go away poverty, I am wearied of your caresses. You have a large society, but I don't appreciate your friendship. Your By-Laws are all right, but against my constitution. Ha! ha! ha! While the earth divulges her secrets to me and pours forth her riches into my lap at the rate of a thousand barrels a day it is all right. Now, if I go on a bum, folks smile. When I was poor they sneered. I can kick boot-blacks, snub common people, break car windows, throw goblets at waiters, wink at the girls, stand on church cushions, jam hats, tell a man he is a liar, spit on the carpet, be drunk or sober, it all passes as a matter of fact. No one objects. What a glorious thing it is to be rich and enjoy life and liberty. Oh, it is nice to strike oil. I am going to leave my measure for a set of diamonds the size of an oil barrel. I will hire a paper to puff me into christianity. Buy a nomination for a fat office. I will have a private box at the opera, shake hands with old Mr. Nabob, and sing—(sings.) I would not be a poor man. I would not if I could. But I need not fret about it, for I could not if I would.

[Swift, who has been listening at door, now enters.]

Swift. Well, Mr. Blackmore, you are feeling quite happy this morning. That was quite a song you were singing. By the way—have you found an investment for me yet?

Blackmore. No oil land yet. But how would you like to buy an interest in my oil well?

Swift. (Laughs.) Ha! ha! ha! That is wonderful.

Blackmore. What is wonderful? What are you laughing at?

Swift. (Laughs again.) Mr. Blackmore, how many eighths have you sold in that well?

Blackmore. (Angry.) That is none of your business.

Swift. I think it is my business when I am now a stockholder.

Blackmore. You a stockholder in my well?

Swift. Yes. I bought a one-eighth interest from Cook & Co., in New York and I thought I would come out myself and see how the business was run before I would tell you about it.

Blackmore. I believe you are an old fraud or you would have shown your papers before this.

Swift. I wanted to know just what kind of a man I had to deal with and I believe I have found out. There are the papers. (Shows papers.) Now Mr. Blackmore I will come to business.

Blackmore. I suppose you want to know whether there is anything coming to you or not. I will have the book-keeper look over the books and see how you stand on expenses.

Swift. My business is with you, not your book-keeper. Now Mr. Blackmore, I know all about your business as well as you know it yourself. You sold ten-eighths in that well and yet claim to hold the controlling interest.

Blackmore. (Very angry.) It is a lie. Who told you any such stuff?

Swift. Hold on Mr. Blackmore, don't get angry; this isn't half of it. I have a copy of all the oil you have shipped for the company and all the oil you have shipped from your private dump, as you call it. (Blackmore walks floor, very mad.) I also have a copy of your private book in the false bottom of that desk and your bank account.

Blackmore. You have been prying into my private affairs very close and minding my business for me, and I don't thank you. Now, when you know so much, what do you propose to do?

Swift. I will give you a good chance to get out of a bad scrape, if you do as I propose. I will take $200,000 and relieve you from a very bad position in the eyes of the law. (Blackmore jumps up angry and excited; draws revolver; levels at Swift and shouts NEVER.)

(Jack jumps from behind door, strikes up Blackmore's arm, revolver goes off in air; Jack prods Blackmore in ribs with large bowie knife and says:

Jack. Drop your pop gun. Mind, I am pizen. (Blackmore drops pistol.)

[Enter Dude.]

Dude. Ah! Mr. Blackmore, the livery is empty. I would request your 'orse to ride to Hollyhopolis.

Jack. Ha! ha! ha! Holyhopolis.

Dude. You saucy whelp; I ought to chastize you.

Jack. O go along to Holyhopolis, it is the holiest place you will ever get to. Mr. Blackmore is going to pay off the national debt and found an asylum for dudes whose mothers are too old to take in washing. (Exit Dude pomposly.) (Blackmore walks floor.)

Swift. Well, Mr. Blackmore, time is precious; there is an officer outside awaiting my orders. You had better consult your own interest.

Blackmore. I will buy you out, and your silence also, to get rid of you, but you must not think you forced me into it.

Swift, Oh, no, I would not force you into anything. (Laughs heartily.)

Blackmore. (Writes and gives check.) There! I hope I will never see you or hear from you again. (Swift signs over interest to Blackmore.)

Swift. Mr. Blackmore, take my advice; stop your dissipaton, buy out some of the other stock-holders and you will come out all right.

Blackmore. When your advice is wanted I will ask you for it.

Swift. (Shows Blackmore papers for Old Maid's farm.) You see, I have found an investment. I think I can make some money out of the Old Maid's farm. Good day, Mr. Blackmore, I will return to New York to-morrow.

Blackmore. The sooner you go the better. I am tired of your company.

Swift. Good day, Mr. Blackmore. (Exit. Curtain.)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Five years have elapsed. Scene of hotel office. Clerk discovered.

[Enter Jack with satchel and sample case.]

Clerk. Good morning, sir. Delightful day.

Jack. Good morning. I wish to engage a room for a few days. (deposits satchel and sample case with clerk.) Your city does not appear so prosperous as it did a few years ago. How is the oil business now?

Clerk. It is quite dull to what it was a few years ago.

Jack. There was a firm here called Blackmore & Co. How is Blackmore prospering?

Clerk. Oh, he has gone to the dogs. His old chums, who helped him spend his money, won't speak to him now. He is a regular sot and they say his child is begging on the street.

Jack. Just what I expected of him.

Clerk. Were you acquainted with him?

Jack. Yes, I had some dealings with him several years ago. What was the cause of his downfall?

Clerk. He was carrying on a double business and drinking too much expensive champagne. An investigation followed by several members of the company and it cost Blackmore the greater part of his fortune to compromise. Deeper drinking soon completed the wreck.

Jack. A very sad position for his family to be placed in. Well, I will look at the town and see what changes have occurred in a few years. (Exit.) Curtain.

SCENE II. Street; Bessie Blackmore discovered with broom and stool; Bessie sweeps crossing and solicits aid for her sick mother. Blackmore, in rags, watches from side, takes money from Bessie as she gets any; ladies pass, enquire of Bessie regarding her mother, give her some money and pass on; Blackmore takes money; Bessie cries.

[Enter Jack; stops at crossing; sits on stool.]

Bessie. Would you give me a little money for your seat?

Jack. I expected you would want something for this accommodation.

Bessie. Oh, sir, my mother is sick and I have no medicine or bread.

Jack. No medicine? No doctor or bread? Here child take this, (gives money.)

Bessie. Oh, sir, not so much. If my father sees me with so much money he will take it from me or beat me.

Jack. Whip you? Well, we will see about that. I helped to fix matters up once in this town, and I can do so again. There is something wrong and it must be made right.

[Bessie starts off; Jack goes opposite; Blackmore catches Bessie and endeavors to get the money; she screams; Jack rushes in; knocks Blackmore down.]

Jack. Take that, you dirty loafer. (Policeman enters and catches Jack.)

Police. Hello, what does this mean?

Jack. Oh, nothing; I merely prevented this rascal from abusing that girl. Here (offers money) step into the hotel and have a champagne.

Police. (Aside.) He seems the right kind of a fellow, and I don't see that he needs to be arrested. (Blackmore meantime is looking all over stage. Police aloud.) What are you hunting for?

Blackmore. Looking for my diamond pin. (Exit Blackmore.)

Police. (Laughs.) Poor devil, he used to wear diamonds, but that time is passed.

Jack. Come little girl, I will go home with you and see what can be done. (Exit. Curtain.)

SCENE III.—Bedroom Mrs. Blackmore in bed. Enter Blackmore.

Blackmore. Have you no money? I must have rum, my brain is on fire.

Mrs. B. Have mercy on us, your child has had nothing to eat to-day.

Blackmore. I suppose she has been to Sunday school paying them money?

Mrs. B. She has no money to pay the Sunday school.

Blackmore. I will—I must have rum. (Takes up Bible.) I will pawn this.

Mrs. B. Oh, don't take that. It is a gift from my mother, and the last of her gifts. Oh, leave it for your child's sake.

Blackmore. (Moves off.) Rum! rum! I must have rum! (Exit with Bible.)

[Enter Bessie, Jack and Miss Moss.]

Bessie. (Runs to her mother, kneels and cries.) Oh, my mother is dying.

Mrs. B. Sing "Tell the Angels I am Coming."

Bessie. (Sings—any tune—2-4 time:

"We are coming, we are coming, Jesus walks by our side;
Tho' we feel the spray of Jordan, we will dread not the tide.
With His loving arm around us, the waves darkly roll,
We shall see the light of glory in the home of the soul."

Miss Moss. Oh, what a scene. Dying with a broken heart, which is her only disease. Despair is the word by which we express the extremity of mental depression, against which the mind for a period fails to reach. Through this dreadful feeling no ray of hope; no sunbeam of joy breaks in upon the darkness of the soul. To one who has reached this state of utter despondency life is no longer desirable. The charms of nature and of art call forth no throb of delight in the dark spirit, and the cheerful earth appears a gloomy and barren wilderness. Sorrow is the noblest of all discipline. Heaven is best discerned through tears—scarcely, perhaps, discerned at all without them. The scenes of death suffice to show this. She bore her sorrow in silence until grief settled down into dark and deep despair. The friends of her prosperity have forgotten her in her poverty. She had nothing to attach her to life except this desolate child. For her sake she endeavored to support her miseries. The thoughts of leaving her exposed to the world shook her fortitude and destroyed her health and mind.

Jack Yes, there are thousands of similar cases, cursed by intemperance and dissipation. We see how it inflicts ruin upon the innocent and helpless. It invades the family, cuts down youth in his manhood, breaks the mother's heart and brings the father down in sorrow to the grave. It furnishes victims for the scaffold; it is the life-blood of the gambler; the food of the highwayman. In scorns virtue, incites the husband to kill his wife, and butcher his innocent children.

Bessie. Oh, my heart dies with my mother. I will have no home.

Jack. I will give you a good home, and my mother shall be your mother.

[Enter Blackmore.]

Blackmore. What means this intrusion?

Jack. It means that your neglect has at last accomplished its

work, and that assistance has come too late.

Blackmore. It is false! Out of my house! (Seizes broom. Jack catches him and throws him through door or window. During the struggle Bessie pleads with her father and endeavors to shield him. Curtain.)

Scene IV.—Parlor. Blackmore and Bessie discovered.

Blackmore. My dear child, I have at last come to my senses, and, God helping me, I will lead a new life. But that demon of drink is yet within me burning my very soul out.

Bessie. It can be overcome; I know it can. We will pray. My Sunday school class will aid us. Oh, how nice it will be. We will leave this place and its sad associations, and begin life anew.

Blackmore. Yes, yes; this is an accursed spot; a ruined life; a blasted reputation, and, above all, a desolate home. But I will succeed. The experience of the past two weeks has been burned upon my brain in letters of fire. Oh, that I could recall it.

Bessie. We cannot recall the past, but we may improve the future. Let us strengthen our resolve. My scholars will be here, and we will unite in prayer and praise for strength. (Five or six little girls in white file in and all join in singing any familiar song, after which they kneel in an attitude of prayer. During the few moments in which they are in this attitude, an old sot blunders in, who is made up to represent a drunkard in very low stage of a drunkard's career. Carries bottle; totters up to Blackmore, and asks him to drink, saying:)

Drunkard. Hello, pard! Have a drink. Hain't seen you for a coon's-age. (Blackmore motions him off while Bessie rising says, with uplifted finger:)

Bessie. Sir, how dare you enter here with that poison of hell; that destroyer of souls, that has turned the hand of the father against the mother, the mother against the child, the husband against the wife? The demon whose work you represent has destroyed the young man in his pride and his manliness. It has made of the fair young girl a creature from whom the vilest wretch shrinks with disgust. It has destroyed the mother's first born, and you offer it to the second. Hell resounds with no more bitter curse than that heaped upon King Alcohol, while angels weep. Go, drink no more, for the sake of all that's good, and may the monster who lives in the sparkling cup be soon and forever banished to the pit of fire, followed by the curses of millions of souls. (Drunkard listens with stupid interest, slowly retreating as curtain falls. Red lights if desired.)

APPLYING FOR LICENSE.

CHARACTERS.

Judge, Smith.
Applicant, Patrick Muldoon.
Lawyer, Mr. Brown.
Temperance Agent, Mrs. Cowden.
Temperance Lawyer, Mr. Robb.
Witness, Mr. Mulcahy.

SCENE.—Court. Judge on bench with parties seated as at court. Court called to order.

Mr. Brown. (Rising.) Your Honor, if you please, I present a petition and proper bondsmen on behalf of Mr. Patrick Muldoon, for license to sell all kinds of liquor in his tavern for the traveling public. Being a worthy man, and complying with the law, we pray the Court will grant such license to the applicant who presented this petition. (Reads a number of names picked up in town where played, which will cause most fun.)

Lawyer Robb. Your Honor, we offer for your consideration a remonstrance against this man. We are prepared to prove that he sells to men of intemperate habits, has drunken fights, and that his house is nothing but a drinking hole.

Muldoon. It is false. Sure I niver was known to sell the second dhrink to my fellow crature phwat hadn't the money to pay for the firrust one. (Court calls Muldoon to order. Enter Mrs. Cowden—boy dressed in women's clothes, with very large bustle, and walking very pigeon-toed. Hands her lawyer a paper from which he reads off a lot of old ladies' names.)

Mr. Robb. Your Honor, I hold in my hand a remonstrance from all the best people, stating that this man keeps a very bad and disorderly house, and is not worthy the name of landlord. His house is nothing but a low doggery. (In meantime Muldoon keeps rising and saying: "Let me at him. I'll bate the head off him." Lawyer R. keeps pulling him down saying: "You'll spoil all if you get that Irish up.")

Lawyer Brown. Your Honor, it is very easy for my opponent to bring charges against this man, but we ask for the evidence, by good,

moral men, neighbors of Mr. Muldoon's, or we ask the Court to grant our wish.

Judge. Mr. Muldoon, can't you run your house without a license?

Muldoon. No, sorr; I couldn't run my house at all, at all, widout a bar.

Judge. I am afraid I will have to refuse you.

Muldoon. (Aside to Judge.) I am a ward politician, and if I don't get license the Republicans may have the ward.

Judge. I will see what I can do for you. (To Lawyer R.) Any witness here?

Lawyer R. Yes, a victim of ill treatment by this landlord. (Calls Mulcahy.) Here Michael, be sworn. (Michael holds up hand.) You do swear by the laws of this court to tell the truth or be punished by the laws of this court.

Lawyer R. Where do you live?

Michael. I was born in Ireland, and went to Dublin for my edication. I am a perfessor, sorr.

Lawyer R. What do you profess to know about this applicant for license?

Michael. He was born in Ireland too.

Lawyer R. What kind of a house does he keep!

Michael. I believe it is a frame house, sorr. (Muldoon shakes fist at Michael on the sly saying: "What did I told ye?"

Lawyer R. Michael, does he keep a good house?

Michael. (Looks at Muldoon.) He does.

Lawyer R. Michael, what do you call a good house?

Michael. Where they keeps good whiskey.

Lawyer R. How do you know Muldoon keeps good whiskey?

Michael. I am a professor, and I tested it. I sample all his whiskey.

Lawyer R. By what test do you decide the liquor is good?

Michael. I drink it myself, sorr, and tell its strength by the quantity it takes to make a man dhrunk.

Lawyer R. Do you drink enough to make you drunk in order to tell its strength?

Michael. Sure I do, its the aisiest way to foind out.

Lawyer R. Well, Michael, did you ever see any fighting in this man's house? (Muldoon shakes fist at witness. Witness scratches his head.)

Michael. Not much, your honor. He practices the manly art, sorr.

Lawyer R. What do you mean by the manly art? Tell the court how you came by that black eye.

Michael. (Looks first at Muldoon, then at Judge, and replies:) It was by the manly art sorr.

Lawyer R. Explain what you mean by the manly art which you talk so much about. (Witness looks at Muldoon, then at court. Muldoon shakes fist.)

Michael. (Aside, after looking puzzled. "I have it.") Mrs. Muldoon coom out to me house in the counthry on a visit, and she says Michael you must coom down and stay wid me a few weeks. Muldoon has killed his pig, we've a foine lot of praties and a barl of good ould Oirish whiskey. We'se want ye to test it. We want ye's to come, he's a pair of new boxin gloves, and he will knock the face off ye.

Lawyer R. Knocking the face off a man is what you call the manly art, is it? Now, Mr. Muldoon, I want you to show the court how you perform the manly art.

Muldoon. (Jumps to his feet and about two feet in air, and throwing glove to witness says:) I will soon do that, bedad. Michael, square yersilf, and I'll bate the life out of ye. Ye had no business here. (They knock each other about, all around stage, finally knocking witness on top of Mrs. Cowden. (Curtain.)

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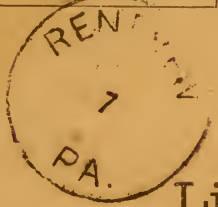

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